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Village Council address trash receptacles concerns

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

The issue of residents not bringing in trash receptacles was discussed again during the Grand Beach Village Council's Wednesday, Feb. 18, meeting.

At a previous meeting, Village Council President Harry Walder said that he keeps receiving complaints about people seeing trash receptacles sitting by the road.

The village has a $5 fee for pulling trash or recycling bins back to the house when left at the road the day after pick-up.

Walder said the mention of a $100 fine for those who don't comply in the January newsletter had gotten a "lot of activity."

One suggestion, he said, was to put a 15-yard dumpster somewhere down by the Department of Public Works building, so those who can't be around Monday to put their cans back can dump their garbage in there.

Last month, he suggested leaving it as an option for residents to use services to move their trash receptacles for them, adding that Can Monkey has a $29 a month can-to-curb fee and Republic charges $25 a month.

"I think some combination or some approach that way might be the right answer to this but again, we need more public input, and then we need to come up with a solution that will work equitably for everybody," Walder said.

Council members agreed that the input was thoughtful and helpful, and agreed that the dumpster could be a possibility. Ed Brandes said that he thinks a centralized dumpster is a good idea but isn't sure yet how it could be implemented.

"You don't want to encourage or allow people to dump all their construction debris or whatever – we've got to figure out a way to do it in such a way it's a like fee for service or it's a restricted access situation so as to prevent people from just generalized dumping in there," he said.

Walder said maybe they should address "how big is that pool of people" whom object to having the cans not being pulled back.

"Maybe we should ask that question and see what kind of input we get – because maybe we do nothing," he said.

Walder added that he doesn't see the council taking any action on the matter until summer, since a lot of residents aren't there to give input.

Symphony Towers Infrastructure has offered the village $296,000 to take over the lease the village has with Verizon for their antenna on the village's water tower. Last month, council member Ed Brandes said he'd forward information regarding the potential Verizon lease buyout to village attorney Sara Senica for further review. Walder said that the proposed contract restricts the village of "some rights we had on the water tower, and we can't agree to that."

He said he asked Brandes to take their offer and change it so it'd meet whatever requirements the village would have and see if Symphony has any interest in it. If so, they can discuss it again and make a decision.

Councilmembers approved Dune Restoration Services building a stairway from the Pro Shop up the hill to the patio for $16,100. Since the council had approved $7,000 for the village to do the project with its own forces, Walder said they were really approving an additional $9,100 for Dune Restoration Services to perform the work.

Council members approved a pay increase for Golf Pro Don Butler of $3,750 for the 2026 golf season. Pro Shop and Golf Commissioner Jack Grace said Butler "runs a tight ship," adding that there were a record number of rounds played last summer and golf cart rentals have been increasing and the staff is very friendly and knowledgeable.

Grace said he expects Butler will only have a few more years in the position and he said that he'll give the council a year's notice when he retires and will train the next person for a full summer.

"It's more than an appreciation raise – it's everything that he does," Grace said, adding that Butler works, weather dependent, a "good seven and a half months."

The purchase of new AED unit for the maintenance building from Pro Safety Innovations for $1986 was approved.

Councilmembers approved the Employee Absentee Policy.

After reviewing it last month, council members approved a Village of Grand Beach fee schedule.

Brandes, who's the police commissioner, said that the Police Committee will be putting in another proposal for a federal grant to build a new police station, adding that two district representatives from the office of Rep. Tim Walberg (MI-05) office in a recent meeting indicated that a proposal "would be favorably received" and that they gave them some direction on it. The same team that put together a proposal last year will be meeting again to submit one in March.

A "vigorous" discussion was held at the last Short Term Rental Committee meeting regarding the "merits of eliminating certain provisions from the zoning laws to make clear short-term rentals are part of the single use occupancy definition and are not any part of the special use," Brandes said.

He added that this has never been "observed in reality" and has been ignored

Eventually you realize, mostly, there is no loyalty, only interests ...
— Dino N. Fatouros

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

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Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
HOWARD MALES, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, BARBARA ANDERSON
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
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Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
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LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, JENNIFER SUMMERS, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
The Board meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 6PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, ARTHUR ANDERSON
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM
VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER, JACK GRACE, ED SEBASTIAN, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Berrien County Health Department warning community about risks of novel potent opioid found in kratom products

The Berrien County Health Department is warning community members about the health risks of 7-hydroxymitragynine, a novel potent opioid found in kratom products being sold at gas stations, smoke shops and marijuana dispensaries.

7-OH can cause anxiety, depression, gastrointestinal distress, insomnia, seizures, addiction and significant withdrawal symptoms, including restlessness, body aches, fatigue, irritability and cold sweats. There also have been rare cases of liver injury and even death.

"We are seeing an increasing number of people in local emergency departments with symptoms related to 7-OH," said Dr. Jonathan Beyer, BCHD's medical director and an emergency room physician. "Since kratom and other products containing 7-OH are sold as herbal or natural supplements, many people do not realize these substances can act as opioids and may cause serious health issues and withdrawal symptoms if used regularly."

Community members may not know 7-OH is in kratom, which is marketed as an energy booster, mood lifter, pain reliever and remedy for symptoms of quitting opioids. Kratom often is sold as a tablet, gummy, drink mix or shot.

7-OH occurs naturally in trace amounts in the kratom plant, but some products contain it in significantly higher concentrations. 7-OH is not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for any medical use and is not permitted as a dietary supplement or an ingredient in conventional foods because it has not met applicable safety standards. Because these products are not regulated by the FDA, it is difficult to determine the concentration of 7-OH or whether contaminants may be present.

Some states, including Indiana, have banned kratom and products containing 7-OH. Twenty-four states have enacted some form of regulation, and several have classified kratom as a controlled substance. Legislation has also been introduced in Michigan.

"The Berrien County Health Department encourages community members to be informed about the risks associated with unregulated supplements and to talk with their health care provider before trying products marketed for pain or mood relief," Beyer said. "Anyone experiencing concerning symptoms or withdrawal related to kratom or other such products is encouraged to seek medical care right away."

For more information about 7-OH, visit the FDA website. — **STAFF REPORTS**

The only current required to spark imagination is wonder. This is all starlight navigating the dimensions between biophysical reality and bliss.
— Brett Padgett

NEW BUFFALO MAN SERIOUSLY INJURED IN CRASH

A driver is accused of being extremely impaired when she caused a head-on collision that badly hurt a New Buffalo businessman near the Michigan line.

Angelique Kepshire, 50, is charged in La Porte Circuit Court with Level 5 felony operating while intoxicated causing serious bodily injury and possession of marijuana.

The La Porte area woman was being held in the La Porte County Jail on $15,000 bond.

According to La Porte County Police, the Feb. 13 crash happened on Indiana 39 near County Road 1000 North.

Police said the investigation shows Kepshire was southbound on the two-lane highway when she failed to negotiate a curve and veered over the center line, striking the oncoming driver head on.

The other driver, David Workman, 60, was taken to the hospital with a three-inch-long laceration down to his skull, police said.

Workman, owner of Lakeshore Recycling and Disposal, also complained of extreme pain.

Police said Kepshire denied having anything to drink, but her blood alcohol level was over four times the .08 percent legal limit.

Psychedelic mushrooms and a THC vape pen were allegedly found in her purse. — **STAN MADDUX**

Hikers to explore Goldberry Woods

Hikers will explore Goldberry Woods at 1 p.m. Saturday, March 7.

As part of an upcoming Harbor Country Hikers Adventure, Julie Haberichter (innkeeper) and Pat Fisher (HCH president) will lead the Hikers through Goldberry Woods along the abandoned banks of Lake Potawatomi with views of the Galien River, its floodplain and tributary ravines. Haberichter has been incubating and raising quail so hikers will stop and investigate her effort along the way. After the hike, there'll be an indoor Tick Control Workshop led by Haberichter. This simple, hands-on conservation workshop is a fun way to make a difference while safeguarding our local ecosystem. Empty paper rolls are always appreciated. The all-inclusive workshop portion is ADA accessible, and the public is encouraged to "join in on the fun."

The celebrated Goldberry Woods retreat features a state-of-the-art micro farm, where guests cultivate a genuine connection to the land, heritage crops and foodie cuisine. There are trails on the property, which lead down to the floodplain and bank of the Galien River.

Although membership is preferred, all are welcome to attend this hike and workshop. Dress for the weather, wear a hat and sturdy shoes or boots, preferred pest controls and bring plenty of water.

For more information, including driving directions, visit the Hikers' website, www.harborcountryhikers.org, or its Facebook page. — STAFF REPORTS

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Mardi Gras raises funds for good causes

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

As was tradition, guests to the Three Oaks American Legion Post 204 let the good times roll for good causes at this year's Mardi Gras, which took place Saturday, Feb. 21.

"Take a look around and you see beauty, beads, masks, laughter and fun - this is what community looks like and I truly believe we live in one of the greatest," Dyane Thomas-Niemzyk, who co-chaired the event with Brandi Hamann, said.

Guests, some of whom came decked out in colorful beads and glittery masks, congregated at tables in a candle-lit room for a cocktail hour before digging into a spread of Cajun-inspired cuisine prepared by chef Matt Lindsey, which included red beans and rice, Cajun gumbo, a voodoo chicken, creole jambalaya and fried catfish. Guests also could view a variety of silent auction items, which included items that were donated by friends, family and local businesses and enjoy live entertainment by Classic Moments.

The event, which has continued to grow year after year, was originally started around 14 years ago to raise funds for local scholarships.

After taking a two-year hiatus, partygoers reconvened in 2024 to raise funds for a kitchen remodel at the legion.

Thomas-Niemzyk said the remodel's about 95 percent done. Final items include the installation of a brand-new hood, which is a $50,000 build, and a sprinkler system.

"It's going to be a licensed commercial kitchen – it's truly beautiful and we're really proud of it and all the things we're going to do with it," she said.

Thomas-Niemzyk said that they've returned to raising funds for scholarships, which are given out by three organizations: the Legion's Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion.

"We get to support local kids chasing their dreams and we're so proud of that," she said.

Funds will also support the Poppy Fund, which supports local veterans and is a part of the Auxiliary program.

Mardi Gras is a team effort. In addition to Lindsey, Hamann said that a Legion member and Sons of the American Legion member, as well as good friend, pitch in with the traditional feast in the kitchen

A committee will help determine where the funds could best be used.

"But they'll always go to the kitchen and always go to scholarships and then we'll decide from there what we're going to do to support our community and veterans," Hamann said.

The Three Oaks American Legion hosts several events throughout the year: A Superbowl party, a ceremony and luncheon for veterans after the Memorial Day ceremony at Forest Lawn Cemetery, a Flag Day celebration and hog roast fundraiser and events for Oaktoberfest to raise funds for the school district.

Monthly, members of the Legion's Auxiliary cook for and deliver food to local veterans, such as ones who are older and are sick and can't get out, as well as cook a massive quarterly meal for The Robert L. Miller Sr. Veterans Center, a homeless shelter for veterans in South Bend. Annually, they do a plated, sit-down meal on Veteran's Day.

The Legion is located at 204 W. Linden Street in Three Oaks.

Amber Lowry, Candice Cooney and Derek Dudiak enjoy Mardi Gras

Classic Moments performs at the legion

Dyane Thomas Niemzyk ntroduces the Three Oaks and River Valley Royal Court

Guest enjoy a Cajun inspired buffet

Members of the Three Oaks and River Valley Royal Court enjoy Mardi Gras

Guests mix and mingle in the legion

Guests view silent auction items

Guests view the silent auction items

Driver dies from impact of ambulance crash

BY STAN MADDUX

It appears the driver who crashed into an oncoming ambulance in La Porte died from the impact of the collision.

Rachel Johnson, 44, of La Porte was pronounced dead at Northwest Health about one hour after the accident Saturday, Feb. 21.

La Porte County Coroner Lynn Swanson said the preliminary findings of an autopsy performed Monday afternoon show Johnson died from blunt force trauma to the head and chest.

Swanson said she is still waiting for the results of a blood test to determine if Johnson had any alcohol or drugs in her system.

She expects to have the findings of the blood test within the next 10 to 14 days.

According to La Porte Police, the ongoing investigation, so far, indicates the ambulance about 7 a.m. was northbound on Rose St. when Johnson while traveling southbound crossed the center line near Adams St.

Police said the ambulance driver tried avoiding the crash by veering to the right side of the roadway, but the two vehicles collided.

The heavily damaged ambulance was disabled, but a second ambulance was called to take Johnson to Northwest Health in La Porte.

"The rig that was in the accident was non-operational," said La Porte County Emergency Medical Service Administrator Eric Fenstermaker.

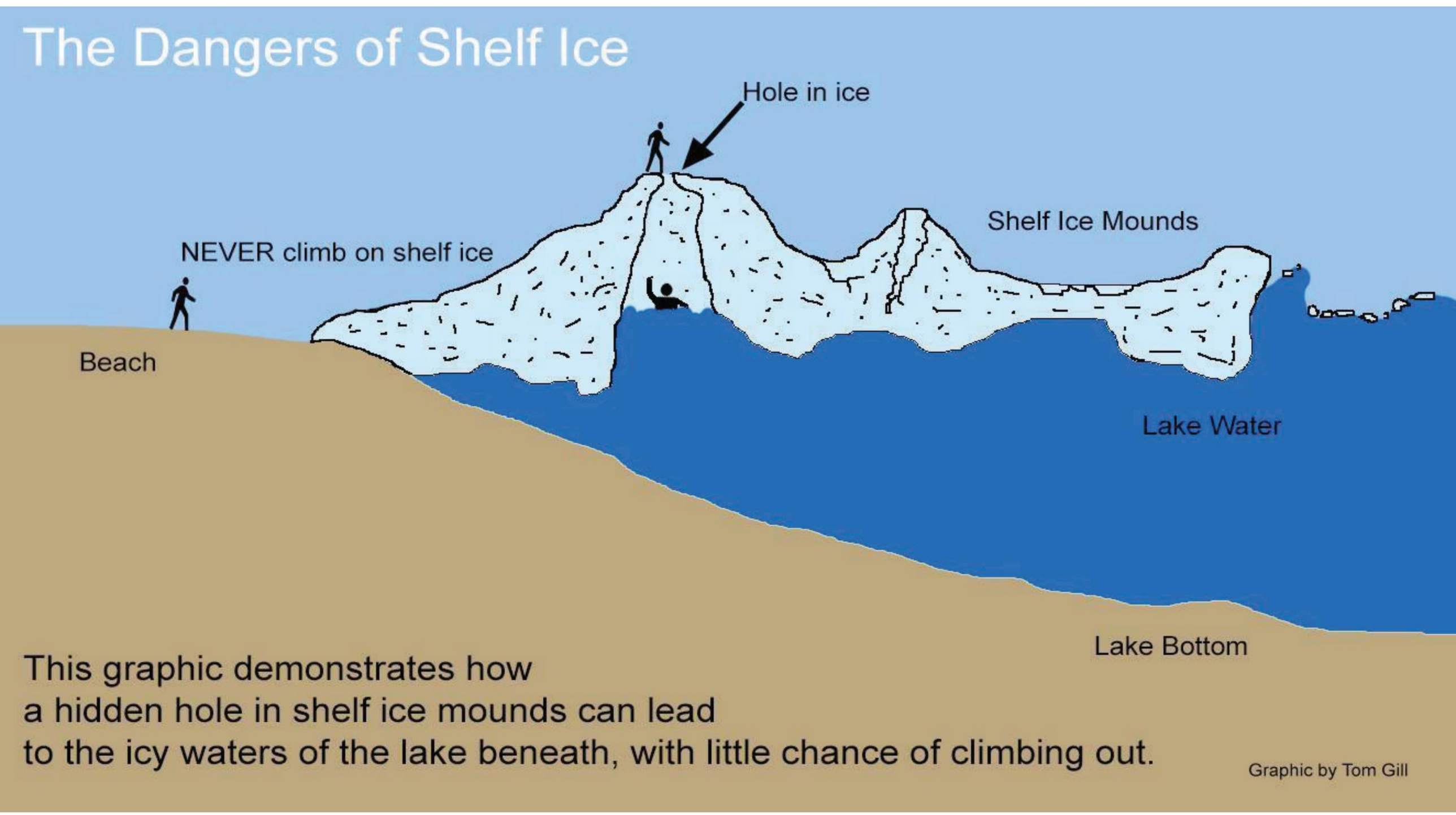
While being treated, Johnson experienced a medical emergency and passed away despite life- saving attempts, police said.

Police said an emergency medical technician in the ambulance reported just minor injuries and was medically evaluated at the scene.

Fenstermaker said there was no patient in the ambulance, which was returning to the base after a service call when struck.

Johnson had a misdemeanor charge of driving without ever receiving a license from June still undecided in La Porte Superior Court 3, according to court records.

Fenstermaker said he's waiting for a decision by the insurance company on whether the ambulance will be repaired or totaled.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This graphic demonstrates how
a hidden hole in shelf ice mounds can lead
to the icy waters of the lake beneath, with little chance of climbing out.
Graphic by Tom Gill

SCHOLASTICS

School board updated on special education, test scores

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Diane Hyatte, special education coordinator, gave a preview of "where we've been and we're going" regarding special education at New Buffalo during the New Buffalo Area Schools Board of Education's Monday, Feb. 23, meeting.

This year, the position was split, as Hyatte has split her time between being teacher and administrator.

Last year, Hyatte said there were approximately 61 students in special education, with 30 in special education programs and 31 in speech and language only.

This year, that total had been bumped a little to 69 students, with 30 being in special education programs and 39 being in speech and language only. Hyatte said the number varies weekly depending on who exits special education and who enters it.

Next year's numbers are projected to be the same but may increase a little due to students qualifying for special education at the elementary school and students moving from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school.

Initiatives the department has taken on this year is implementing Docusign, which parents use to sign any necessary paperwork. Hyatte said that, as soon as parents who think their child is eligible for special education fill out a districtwide request form, the evaluation process begins.

Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavioral Intervention Plan training, Prior Written Notice training and START training were done by staff.

Hyatte said she's in the process of forming a Best Buddies after school club, where nondisabled peers do social activities with disabled ones.

This year, that total had been bumped a little to 69 students, with 30 being in special education programs and 39 being in speech and language only. Hyatte said the number varies weekly depending on who exits special education and who enters it.

Up until recently, Michigan didn't recognize dyslexia as a learning disability. In 2027-2028, districts will be required to screen all students for dyslexia. The state has approved two programs for screening students and 14 for instruction.

Hyatte said the state has been seeing a lot of homeschooled students move back into the district and not being at grade level. As a result, there's been discussion around having placement tests to determine where they are and where they should be, adding that some are being referred to Special Education due to being so far behind.

Board members heard a 2026 Winter NWEA Map Growth assessment and 2025 Fall NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) Data Summary.

Sam Stine, director of curriculum, said that they're "exceeding national norms" at each grade level in kindergarten through eighth grade MAP Measures of Academic Progress) reading scores. Overall, 89% of the 343 students tested performed above the national average in Reading. The first, third and fifth grade had over 95% of students at/above norms.

The average score in math exceeds the national grade-level average (norm) at each grade level. Overall, about 95% of the 344 students tested performed at or above national average in math, per a slideshow that Stine presented. Many of grade levels also had over 90% students at or above norms.

Regarding the Fall 2025 NMSQT scores for 11th grade, Stine said that the total score exceeds the national average, while the EBRW (Evidence Based Reading and Writing) score section is roughly 60 points above the national average and Math score is slightly below the national average (Norm).

Regarding ERW "Knowledge and Skills," the relative strength was Information and Ideas and Relative Weakness was Standard English Conventions. Regarding Math Knowledge and Skills, the relative strengths were Problem-Solving and Data Analysis and Algebra, and the relative weakness was Advanced Math, which Stine is consistent "across the board" in most districts.

All these areas are being worked on in Advisory, Stine said, with the data being shared with high school principal Tracy Ripley.

This year, Stine said every student took the test rather than a select group of students.

Board members approved the cooperative sports program with River Valley for high school boys' soccer, fall 2026; high school boys' and girls' cross country, fall 2026 and high school boys' basketball, winter 2026. Superintendent Adam Bowen said that all the sports will be fully merged after next year.

Board members approved applying for Congressional spending funds associated with the Bison Preserve Planned Unit Development (PUD) project. Bowen said this regarding direct congressional spending, such through Sen. Gary Peters, Sen. Elissa Slotkin and Rep. Tim Walberg.

Bowen said that developer Leeward Ventures is continuing to "refine the conceptual plan of the development agreement and details" of Bison Preserve. Tentatively, Leeward is scheduled to present to the board on their progress April 13.

Board members adopted the National School Breakfast Week Proclamation for March 2 - 6.

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO

Some people go to church on Sunday mornings.

The summer brings baseball fans out to the ballpark and fall and winter have dye hard football fans tailgating at stadiums across the land.

Church goers are filled with religion, baseball fans relive their youth and prepare themselves for an afternoon enjoying America's pastime, and football fans love to tailgate, party, and get ready to cheer wildly for their team.

This past Sunday, I got up a little early to watch the United States take on Canada for mens hockey gold medal, a medal that has eluded the U.S. since the "miracle on ice" in 1980.

The game was great and went into overtime because of great goaltending by the U.S. goalie Connor Hellebuyck. When Jack Hughes lit the lamp to give the United States a 2-1 victory, the players joy was obvious and heartwarming.

Highlights were shown throughout the day and they would cut to bars to show people sharing in the joy. Murphy's bar in Wrigleyville was front and center with joyous hockey fans.

For the first time in quite awhile, the whole country was inspired and pulling together for a common goal. Ironically the women's team beat the Canadian women with an overtime goal to defeat Canada by a 2-1 margin. Both the women and the men were solid individuals who came together to form great teams and the entire country is proud of them.

Whatever gets you up on Sunday mornings is important. A picnic, taking your kids to a game, getting that extra hour of sleep you need so that you can function better during the week, sports, religion, going for a swim, etc.

The world is a complicated place and taking a day off to reset is good for the soul. Most of us have obligations that don't allow us to do the same thing every week, but somehow football fans spend 20 or so weeks watching their favorite team. Religious people make it to church most every week. I'm a big fan of having a little routine in life, again, if at all possible.

Baseball, which some people find boring, brings me joy.

The routine of ballgames for 162 regular season games, plus spring training and playoffs, is comforting. Watching the neighborhood kids playing in the park, seeing friends kids play and grow from t-ball players to getting scholarships to play at major universities.

The most fun is seeing and hearing about your grandkids escapades. I live about 75 miles from one set of grandkids and 400 miles from the other, but it brings me joy to hear about and occasionally see them play any sport.

I just saw one of my grandkids play in a basketball game and it was great. Football and baseball games are hopefully on the agenda for later this year. Star or reserve, winning or losing, learning to be part of a team is invaluable.

Michael Jordan said, "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

Your children need your presence more than your presents.
— Jesse Jackson

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MEDIATOR MARKET SEEKING VENDORS

The Mediator Market, a Harbor Country marketplace, with local artisans, antiques, collectables, attic treasures, baked goods, refreshments and more, will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, June 6, at the Episcopal Church of the Mediator at 14280 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, Michigan.

Applications are now being accepted for 12-foot-by-12-foot booth spaces in the lawn area. Each booth space is $25. Contact Candice in the Church Office for an application form at office@mediatorharbert.com or 269-469-1441.

Vendors can sell your artwork, crafts, antiques, jewelry, books, jams, honey, etc. and keep all the proceeds from the sales.

For questions, please contact Marilee Roth at mjrothfarm@gmail.com or at 269-465-5155. — STAFF REPORTS

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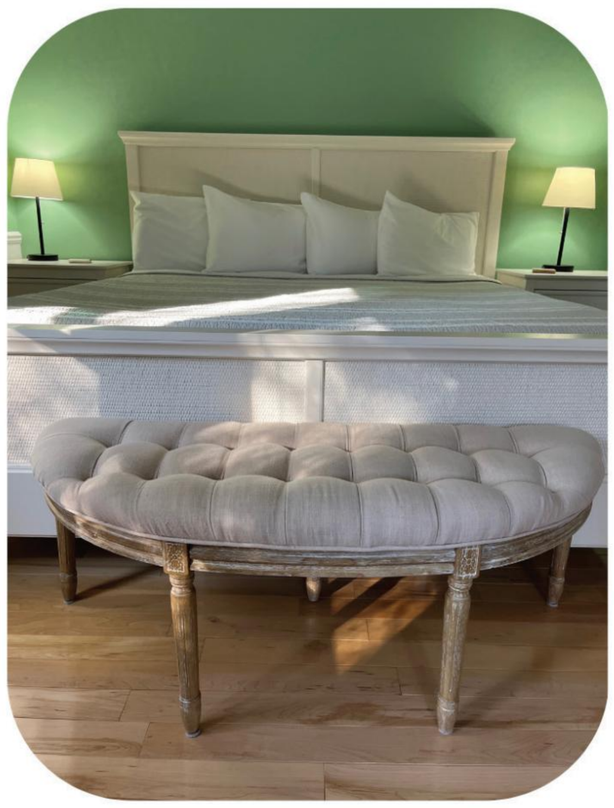
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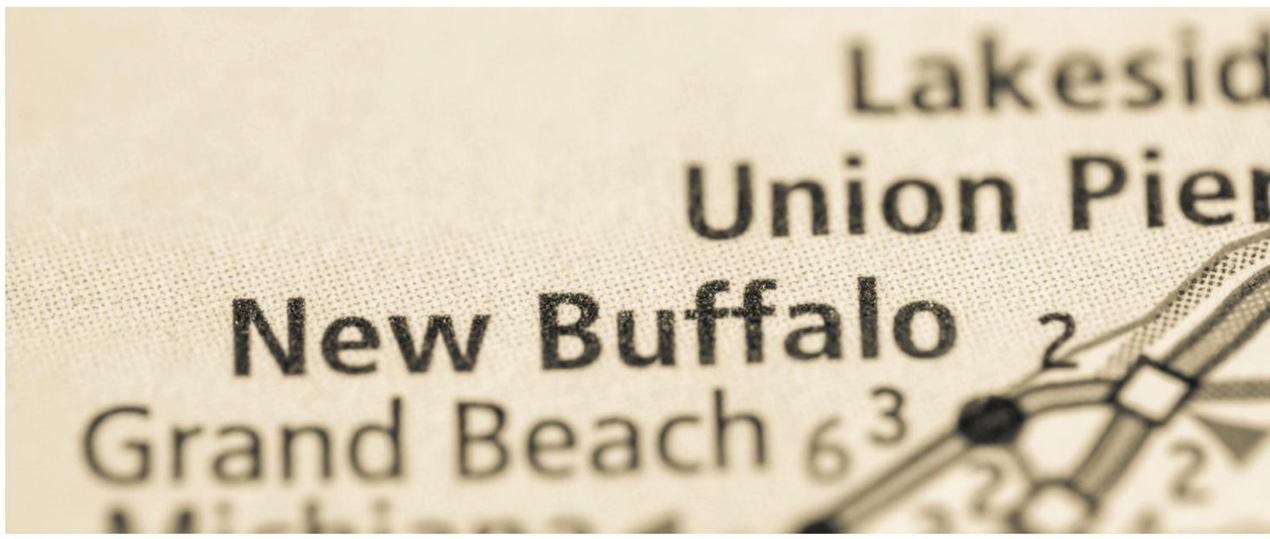

A Writer's Life...

DURING THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION ANIMATION

BY JACK OLESKER

Playful Toppers and The Three Wise Women

As Kaaren's assistant continued to lead Lori and me through Mattel's third floor to the conference room, I saw all manner of toys apparently precariously balanced atop almost all cubicle walls. I figured they were glued so they'd stay in place.

From Western Barbies and Happy Holidays Barbies to Tropical Barbies carrying surfboards and Day to Night big business Barbies and Astronaut Barbies complete with metallic pink (of course) and silver space suits, Barbie was a topper on many cubicle wall tops, almost as if it was a corporate duty to display them.

But there were plenty of other Mattel toys competing for attention. Masters of the Universe action figures, notably He-man and Skeletor, Rainbow Brite dolls clinging to cubicle tops, a few carefully positioned Magic 8 Balls and – wait a second! – Popples!

I was stunned to see Popples until it dawned on me that American Greetings, the parent corporation of Those Characters From Cleveland, was a greeting card company and that they licensed Mattel to manufacture my beloved Popples. I was borderline ticked Lori never explained this, but I accepted it as her way. She looked to me to see if this was registering and I did my best to hide it.

Something else struck me as we walked. All the cubicles were arranged so none of the openings faced the walkway we visitors were being escorted along. I was also betting the cubicles were set up so none of the openings offered a view into the opening of a neighboring cubicle.

I waited for a Mattel employee to bleat a desperate plea to a visitor – "Help! Get me out of here! I'm being held prisoner!" None did.

Kaaren's assistant opened the door to the conference room and Lori and I walked in to see Kaaren Lee Brown and Debra Galliani rising from very expensive chairs on one side of a very expensive, very long conference table. There were smiles all around as the tastefully business attired Mattel execs embraced Lori. Lori made the introductions and we all did handshakes and business card exchanges. It was apparent, even without looking at their cards, that Kaaren was in charge, a high ranking executive. Debra was her subordinate, but clearly an important exec.

Kaaren was a go-getter, the kind of person who loved action and got things done. Debra impressed me as cautious, someone who assessed situations and people so she could move effectively. As we sat, I realized the Mattel execs and Lori had a lot in common. They all were, as the French say, bien dans sa peau — comfortable in their own skin. They were execs who worked hard to get where they were at, were confident in their abilities and positions and were respected by their superiors. I accepted I was a few years from achieving that, but I knew it would come in good time and after I'd confronted and overcome the kind of array of obstacles that they had surely encountered during their own climbs.

Kaaren and Debra were effusive in their praise for my work on Popples. I dutifully mention Bobby's efforts, but their focus was on me. I thanked them and said how much I enjoyed working on Popples, leaving the door open for them to talk about why I was here. I glanced to Lori. I was guessing this was about a new animated series I was to be working on.

I couldn't have possibly been more wrong.

HOROSCOPE

FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 4, 2026

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

Even if you get push back from friends, you have to bring things to fruition. This is the time to pursue the things you have been thinking about. Go that one step further. This is not the time to be weak minded or put off by the comments people make. You know what is right for you and what is ultimately possible.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

The energy coming your way this week is all about coming into a safe harbor after a long unpredictable journey. There's a little heart flutter as the feeling of stability through the uncertainty is now coming. Having experienced a lot over the last couple of years, you know who you are now. Time for first steps.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

Some times what you have to do and what you want to do don't always match up, and you have to make peace somewhere in between. Be prepared to make decisions that might create upheaval for yourself but will ultimately free you from having to hold all the burden or having to wait for others to end things first.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

The energy this week will be lining things up in a way that you will have the opportunity to encounter people and situations that will give you the chance to advocate for yourself and connect with people that share similar ideas. Be courageous and talk to people. Be the one to make the first move.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

There is a massive flow of energy coming your way now, which could stir up a lot of drama. When things get hectic or difficult, focus on higher powers that bring higher potentials and possibilities. Try to see the bigger picture that difficulties ultimately lead you to a greater level understanding and commitment.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

Partners will have a lot going on this week which may bring about some changes to your regularly scheduled program. The good news is you already did your homework and are prepared for the unexpected so, go on the journey with them. Let them show you some different things for a change.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

A lot will be happening with coworkers and the people you have helped over the past year, which could affect the way you make time for yourself now. Be prepared to get deeper into something creative that will free you from having to be so available to them but yet they will still be accommodated for them.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

Relationships will be undergoing some remodeling and feelings will change. No matter what unusual circumstance your partner or friends encounter, you will be the voice of reason now. So, don't hold back. Be courageous and call out the dangerous activities before it affects you and your serenity.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

People might say things that bother you but it is because they may be right on target. Boundaries might feel tested but ultimately it will help you see why things haven't been like they should and how to heal it. Be courageous and bring order to chaotic situations that you didn't know how to handle until now.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

There will be a lot of action in the world around you which could rock your boat a little, but it doesn't mean you can't enjoy the show. This is the time to have fun and do things differently. Let the unexpected create spontaneous moments of joy that show you where you are creative and courageous.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18

This is the time to move on financial opportunities that will will make your living arrangement more permanent and stable. This is about having the courage to act and make the first move even if it seems risky. You have already been prepared, you just haven't seen a reason to act on things until now.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

The energy coming your way this week may bring about some upheavals in your partnerships or the people you work closely with. There is a sense of having to look more deeply into your own actions or communication style. Take the upper hand by making adjustments with your feelings first.

If you have a lot of data and you want to create value from that data, one of the things you might consider is building up an AI team. — *Andrew Ng*

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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

		9				7		6
5			9		8			1
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		8		1				7
		7				3		5
4	9						8	
	6						7	
						4	6	9
9		3		4				

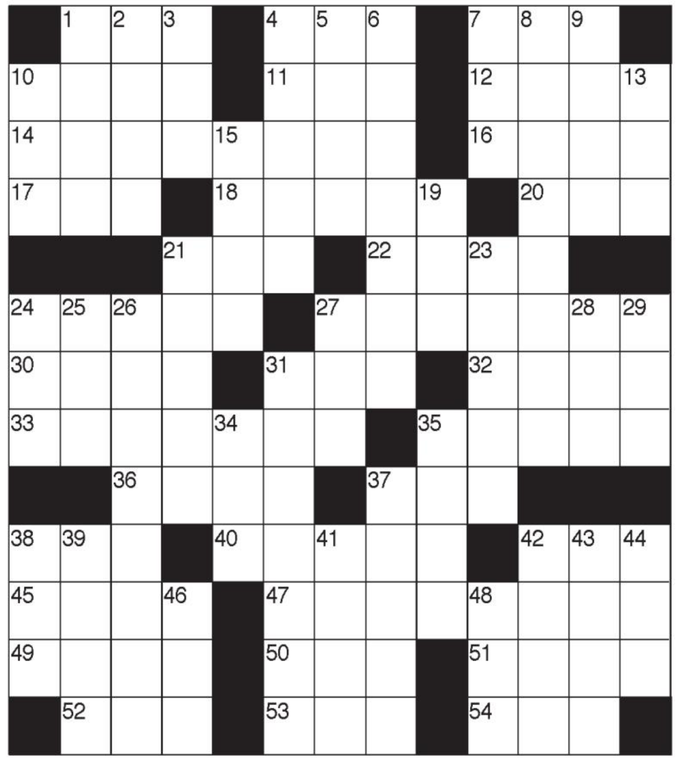
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Hemp shrub
4 Opening
7 Female sheep
10 Fr. soprano
11 Compass direction
12 Bean
14 Addendum
16 Rosebud, e.g.
17 Burmese knife
18 Hindu prayer position
20 Pair
21 Tosspot
22 Russ. inland sea
24 Ancient fish
27 Balm
30 Cork helmet
31 Cathode-ray tube (abbr.)
32 King of Israel
33 One of the Seven Hills of Rome
35 Desolate
36 End
37 Bullring cheer
38 N.Z. woody vine
40 Mother-of-pearl
42 Braz. tree
45 Ceylonese langur
47 Cuke
49 Son of Judah
50 Father: Arabic
51 Ancient Per. province
52 Air traffic control (abbr.)
53 Article (Fr.)
54 Part of a course

DOWN

1 Scientific name (suf.)
2 Annul
3 Async-Sync Interface (abbr.)
4 Spirit (Ger.)
5 Forest ox
6 Banner
7 Loop trains
8 Colima (2 words)
9 Flightless bird
10 Block
13 Stir
15 New Mexico art colony
19 Amer. Red Cross (abbr.)
21 Pile
23 Mush
24 Et cetera (abbr.)
25 Haitian voodoo deity
26 Gibus (2 words)
27 Container
28 ___ pro nobis
29 One who is (suf.)
31 Pers. lynx
34 John, Gaelic
35 Blue (Fr.)
37 Hades
38 Love (Lat.)
39 Jap. writing system
41 Caribbean island
42 Qualified
43 Wampum
44 Fortify
46 Ancient (abbr.)
48 Honey



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Nearly two-thirds of active Michigan voters* would be concerned if government placed these notices on websites because important information could be concealed from the public.

* EPIC-MRA 2011

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This newspaper supports your right to know.

A Day in the Life

A SHOCKING SITUATION...

BY LAWRENCE VON EBELER

All plans are off until the bugs are gone!

I got punished for bringing home one of my second hand treasures that were pillow throws that are magnificent with a colorful rooster in the center of a nice pattern and large ruffles all around them. It crossed my paranoid mind that I should perhaps wash them before using, but they were looking fresh and beautiful, so I quickly removed my other designer pillows and replaced them with the new ones, and loved them!

The next morning after they had been on the bed for the night I uncovered my pillow with a white pillow case and gasped when I saw little crawling bugs. It came to my paranoid mind immediately that they were possibly my greatest dread, that being Bed Bugs! I called a company to inspect them and they confirmed they were indeed Bed Bugs! I felt like crying "No "No, it can't be, it just could not be my worst nightmare", but it was according to the exterminator who quoted me his fees for removing them from the whole house. $2,400 was his price and I thought the pillow cases were kind of expensive! They were: $,2400 dollars worth!

It turned out I had a friend who had dealt with them in his house and knew all about getting rid of them, thank god. The only problem with that was that it is an enormous challenge of a job to undertake, endless precautions and treatment. My new sporty white stroller doesn't help with bed bugs.

First of all, everything has to be removed off the bed and washed including the fancy bedspread and pillow covers, of course and the mattress cover and everything near and around the bed including all clothes near and far. The whole house has to be sprayed with a special fluid, and I mean every square inch. Roscoe has to be removed from the house and washed and treated as well. Got the picture? It's pure Hell dealing with this program, and at this point I'm not even half complete after three days of hard labor. Why am I doing it myself? $2400 is the reason why! That's what the exterminator wanted to do to the house. One thinks twice on a fixed income before committing to that kind of money. Plus they want you to leave the house for four days. So you can add another tidy sum if you don't want to possibly expose a good friend's house, which they would naturally fear. It's all too much, too traumatic, too expensive; A genuine nightmare.

In recent times I have been crowing about what a good life and positive mind I have had of late. That's not surprisingly gone. I guess there are worse things that could happen, I just can't think of any at the moment.

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To Your Health

COLUMN BY KAREN EDWARDS ND

REDUCING HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE NATURALLY

To be successful at reducing high blood pressure, you have to first know what causes it to rise. High blood pressure (hypertension) is mostly caused by lifestyle factors like wrong diet, smoking, high stress, diabetes, kidney disease, sleep apnea, lack of physical activity, obesity, and alcohol consumption. Many of these issues can be reversed through change.

Genetics is said to be a factor, but genetics only load the gun, diet and lifestyle pull the trigger. If you are born with genetic weaknesses anywhere in your body, you can usually reverse it by making changes in your own life. You don't have to have high blood pressure just because your parents did. Maybe you are eating the same favorite family processed foods that caused their high blood pressure. However, congenital issues can be a complication. This is a structural problem with the heart that is present at birth, resulting from abnormal development. This may require surgery at some point in your life.

Your blood vessels should be open and elastic for healthy circulation. When plaque builds up in the artery walls and they become narrowed and stiff, they restrict oxygen rich blood flow to the heart and brain. This can cause many symptoms, and even lead to a heart attack or stroke.

Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn is an acclaimed cardiovascular physician who is known for pioneering the use of a strict whole-food, plant-based diet to prevent and reverse coronary artery disease. His research proved that cardiovascular disease is reversible through nutrition and lifestyle. You can find his books at the library. There are many you tube videos you can watch on his educational channel of reversing heart disease. I suggest everyoneread the book called "The China Study" that will show you scientifically how diet can reverse heart disease and even cancer.

Natural health can be achieved by adopting a whole food plant-based diet, exercising regularly, managing stress, getting healthy sleep and maintaining a healthy weight. This is key to cardiovascular health. Research the 'blue zone' diets. There are five places on earth where people live significantly longer and enjoy healthier lives. Often reaching age 100 or more. They do not eat processed foods, and meat is very limited. Their diet consists of leafy greens, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds and healthy fats. Ridding all processed foods, sugar, and trans fats.

Taking back your health is something that you can do. Educate yourself on correct diet and start moving. Watch Forks over Knives documentary. Change and transform your health. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjTWFoqLy34&t=3s

If you blood pressure is high, immediately drink 16 oz of water with fresh lemon squeezed into it. Don't take your Blood pressure constantly. If it is high, the stress alone will keep it high.

If you are on blood pressure medication and do choose to adopt a healthy diet and lifestyle, let your doctor know this. Your blood pressure RX will become too strong. Work with them on reducing your medicine. Do not go off your medicine on your own cold turkey.

Disclaimer: Everything here is for nutritional education and is not meant to diagnose, treat prevent or cure. See your doctor when you have questions.

PET OF THE WEEK

SQUEE

If Squee's energy could besom sold in a bottle, it would sell out. This guy is over a year old, weighs around 60 pounds, and neutered with his up-to-date vaccinations. Squee is good with other dogs that can match his energy, but doesn't match with cats. He is ok with older children. When Squee bring his toy, he just makes a smile. Make Squee part of your home today.

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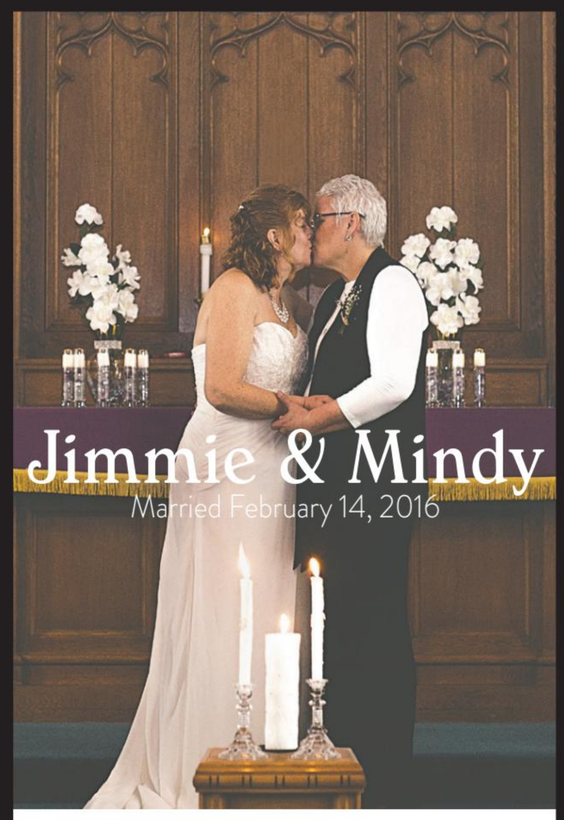

Jimmie was fired from her job as a teacher because of who she loves.

In 31 states in this country, it's legal to discriminate against LGBT Americans. That means you can be fired from your job, evicted from your home, or even denied medical services because of who you are or who you love.

Everyone has the right to marry. Not everyone has basic rights.

Get the facts at Beyond I Do .org

Brittney Sherrill helps Bella, Ellis and Logan Sherrill with a craft

Miss Three Oaks and River Valley Johnna Rochefort reads a royal-themed story

A royal afternoon at Three Oaks Township Library

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Just before March is Reading Month, members of local royalty took the time out of their other engagements to stop by story time at Three Oaks Township Library Thursday, Feb. 19

In keeping with the royal theme, 2026 Miss Three Oaks/ River Valley and Miss Congeniality Johnna Rochefort and Mr. Three Oaks/River Valley Clayton Burk read "The Prince's Bedtime" by Joanna Oppenheim and "May I Bring a Friend?" by Beatrice Schenk De Regniers to a group of young book lovers.

Afterward, members of the Royal Court helped everyone make crowns, which were bespeckled with sparkles, so that they, too, could be royalty for an afternoon.

Mr. Three Oaks and River Valley Clayton Burk reads a royal themed story

The Three Oaks and River Valley Royal Court leads a crown-making craft

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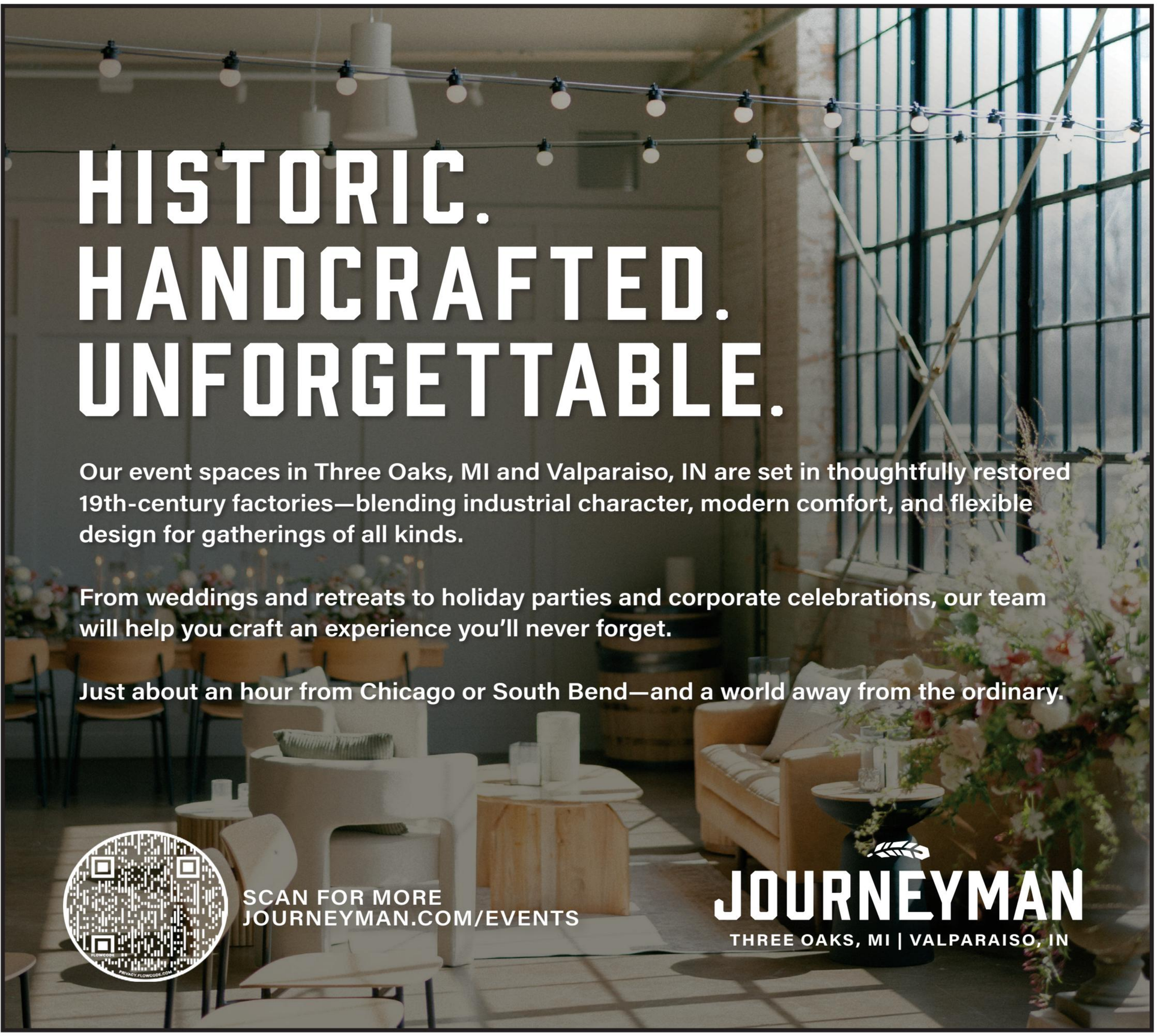
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